

# Starchain Independent Review

## Explanation of Highlights

Lacking Citations But Not Flagrantly Wrong

Unfounded Or Misconstrued Statements

Inaccurate Information Not Contained In Source, Fear Mongering

Starchain Commentary, As Kept To A Minimum

## All Roads Lead To Dark Winter

Posted on April 1, 2020 Author Whitney Webb & Raul Diego Comments(46)

***The leaders of two controversial pandemic simulations that took place just months before the Coronavirus crisis – Event 201 and Crimson Contagion – share a common history, the 2001 biowarfare simulation Dark Winter. Dark Winter not only predicted the 2001 anthrax attacks, but some of its participants had clear foreknowledge of those attacks.***

During the presidency of George H.W. Bush in the early 1990s, something disturbing unfolded at the U.S.' top biological warfare research facility at Fort Detrick, Maryland. Specimens of highly contagious and deadly pathogens – Anthrax and ebola among them – had disappeared from the lab, at a time when lab workers and rival scientists had been accused of targeted sexual and ethnic harassment and several disgruntled researchers had left as a result.

In addition to missing samples of Anthrax, ebola, hanta virus and a variant of AIDS, two of the missing specimens had been labeled “unknown” – “an Army euphemism for classified research whose subject was secret,” according to reports. The vast majority of the specimens lost were never found and an Army spokesperson would later claim that it was “likely some were simply thrown out with the trash.”

An internal Army inquiry in 1992 would reveal that one employee, Lt. Col. Philip Zack, had been caught on camera secretly entering the lab to conduct “unauthorized research, apparently involving anthrax,” the *Hartford Courant* would later report. Despite this, Zack would continue to do infectious disease research for pharmaceutical giant Eli Lilly and would collaborate with the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease (NIAID) throughout the 1990s.

The *Courant* had also noted that: “A numerical counter on a piece of lab equipment had been rolled back to hide work done by the mystery researcher [later revealed to be Zack], who left the misspelled label ‘antrax’ in the machine’s electronic memory.” The *Courant*’s report further detailed the extremely lax security controls and chaotic disorganization that then characterized the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases (USAMRIID) lab in Fort Detrick.

This same lab would, a decade later, be officially labeled as the source of the anthrax spores responsible for the 2001 anthrax attacks, attacks which are also officially said to have been the work of a “deranged” USAMRIID researcher, despite initially having been blamed on Saddam Hussein and Iraq by top government officials and mainstream media. Those attacks killed 5 Americans and sickened 17.

I have found no flagrant inaccuracies, but word choice and lack of citations suggest that this was fluffed up.

Yet, as the investigation into the 2001 anthrax attacks unfolded, accusations from major U.S. newspapers soon emerged that the FBI was deliberately sabotaging the probe to protect the Anthrax attacker and that the CIA and U.S. military intelligence had refused to cooperate with the investigation. The FBI did not officially close their investigation into the 2001 anthrax attacks, nicknamed “Amerithrax,” until 2010 and aspects of that investigation still remain classified.

More recently, this past July, the same Fort Detrick lab would be shut down by the CDC, after it was found that researchers “did not maintain an accurate or current inventory” for toxins and “failed to

safeguard against unauthorized access to select agents.” The closure of the lab for its numerous breaches of biosafety protocols **would be hidden from Congress** and the facility would controversially be **partially reopened** last November before all of the identified biosafety issues were resolved.

The author has demonstrated here, and will again below, that they have never adhered to bio lab procedures or gained an understanding of how they work. They were either misled by the strongly-worded jargon or intended to mislead the readers. The bar for limited operations was far exceeded, the “breaches of containment” are again mischaracterizations of jargon, a double door procedure was not followed, but no breaches in layman’s terms existed.

The same day that the lab was controversially allowed to partially reopen, which was the result of heavy lobbying from the Pentagon, local news outlets reported that the lab had suffered “two breaches of containment” last year, though the nature of those breaches and the pathogens involved were redacted in the inspection findings report **obtained by the *Frederick News Post***. Notably, USAMRIID has, **since the 1980s**, worked closely with virologists and virology labs in Wuhan, China, where the first epicenter of the current novel Coronavirus (Covid-19) cases emerged. The Chinese government has since alleged that the virus had been brought to China by members of the **U.S. military**, members of which attended the World Military Games in the country last October.

This initial reporting is from the hacker group Anonymous, and because it gained traction with conspiracists in America, China half-heartedly parroted the message mocking Donald Trump’s Sinophobic statements.

Such similarities among these Fort Detrick lab breaches, from the early 1990s to 2001 to the present, may be nothing more than unfortunate coincidences that are the result of a stubborn federal government and military that have repeatedly refused to enforce the necessary stringent safety precautions on the nation’s top biological warfare laboratory.

Yet, upon examining not only these biosafety incidents at Fort Detrick, but the 2001 Anthrax attacks and the current Covid-19 outbreak, another odd commonality stands out — **high-level war games exercise took place in June 2001 that eerily predicted not only the Anthrax attacks, but also the initial government narrative of those attacks and much, much more.**

There’s nothing eerie about a war-game predicting reality, you sit in on enough of these, and it all happens. Starchain is aware of a NATO war-game, which predicted the deployment and strategy of insurgent suicide drones 5 years before drones were available commercially.

That June 2001 exercise, known as “Dark Winter,” also predicted many aspects of government pandemic response that would later re-emerge in last October’s simulation “Event 201,” which predicted a global pandemic caused by a novel Coronavirus just months before the Covid-19 outbreak. In addition, the U.S. government would lead its own multi-part series of pandemic simulations, called “Crimson Contagion,” that would also predict aspects of the Covid-19 outbreak and government response.

Event 201 and Crimson Contagion were both modeled after the SARS and MERS outbreaks, both Coronavirus respiratory illnesses originating in China, which I experienced. **It is not surprising or suspicious the most likely event which the simulations predicted happened.**

Upon further investigation, key leaders of both Event 201 and Crimson Contagion, not only have deep and longstanding ties to U.S. Intelligence and the U.S. Department of Defense, they were all previously involved in that same June 2001 exercise, Dark Winter. **Some of these same individuals would also play a role in the FBI’s “sabotaged” investigation into the subsequent Anthrax attacks and are now handling major aspects of the U.S. government’s response to the Covid-19 crisis.** One of those individuals, Robert Kadlec, was recently put in charge of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) entire Covid-19 response efforts, despite the fact that he was recently and directly responsible for actions that needlessly infected Americans with Covid-19.

**It’s easier to renew contracts or otherwise retain the knowledge base than to hire or refresh. Like politicians, experts tend to hang around; unsurprisingly, relevant experts continue to work in their relevant fields. This is fear-mongering.**

Other major players in Dark Winter are now key drivers behind the “biodefense” mass surveillance programs currently being promoted as a technological solution to Covid-19’s spread, despite evidence that such programs **actually worsen** pandemic outbreaks. Others still have close connections to the

insider trading that recently occurred among a select group of U.S. Senators regarding the economic impact of Covid-19 and are set to personally profit from lucrative contracts to develop not just one, but the majority, of experimental Covid-19 treatments and vaccines currently under development by U.S. companies.

The cited article is pertaining to Israel, and one of its programs & was written by an associate physician. The largest issue with the “technological solution[s]” is paranoid and selfish individuals; the second outbreak in New Zealand illustrates this. Insider trading is terrible but not uncommon, and in net, both sides of the aisle stand to make small portfolio gains, this statement fear mongers.

This investigative series, entitled “Engineering Contagion: Amerithrax, Coronavirus and the Rise of the Biotech-Industrial Complex,” will examine these disturbing parallels between the 2001 anthrax attacks and the current scandals and “solutions” of the Covid-19 crisis as well as the simulations that eerily preceded both events. By tracing key actors in Dark Winter from 2001 to the present, it is also possible to trace the corruption that has lurked behind U.S. “biodefense” and pandemic preparedness efforts for decades and which now is rearing its ugly head as pandemic panic distracts the American and global public from the fundamentally untrustworthy, and frankly dangerous, individuals who are in control of the U.S. government’s and corporate America’s response.

Given their involvement in Dark Winter and, more recently, Event 201 and Crimson Contagion, this series seeks to explore the possibility that, just like the 2001 anthrax attacks, government insiders had foreknowledge of the Covid-19 crisis on a scale that, thus far, has gone unreported and that those same insiders are now manipulating the government’s response and public panic in order to reap record profits and gain unprecedented power for themselves and control over people’s lives.

## A Dark Winter Descends

In late June 2001, the U.S. military was preparing for a “**Dark Winter**.” At Andrews Air Force Base in Camp Springs, Maryland, several Congressmen, a former CIA director, a former FBI director, government insiders and privileged members of the press met to conduct a biowarfare simulation that would precede both the September 11 attacks and the 2001 Anthrax attacks by a matter of months. It specifically simulated the deliberate introduction of smallpox to the American public by a hostile actor. The simulation was a collaborative effort led by the Johns Hopkins Center for Civilian Biodefense Strategies (part of the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security) in collaboration with the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), the Analytic Services (ANSER) Institute for Homeland Security and the Oklahoma National Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism. The concept, design and script of the simulation were created by Tara O’Toole and Thomas Inglesby of the Johns Hopkins Center along with Randy Larsen and Mark DeMier of ANSER. The full script of the exercise can be read [here](#).

Good time to note that hostile foreign actors were as much an impetus for this as the lack of security in research centers, particularly Russia’s storage of weaponized small pox.

The name for the exercise derives from a statement made by Robert Kadlec, who participated in the script created for the exercise, when he states that the lack of smallpox vaccines for the U.S. populace means that “it could be a very dark winter for America.” Kadlec, a veteran of the George W. Bush administration and a former lobbyist for military intelligence/intelligence contractors, is now leading HHS’ Covid-19 response and led the Trump administration’s 2019 “Crimson Contagion” exercises, which simulated a crippling pandemic influenza outbreak in the U.S. that had first originated in China. Kadlec’s professional history, his decades-old obsession with apocalyptic bioweapon attack scenarios and the **Crimson Contagion** exercises themselves are the subject of Part III of this series.

The Dark Winter exercise began with a briefing on the geopolitical context of the exercise, which included intelligence suggesting that China had intentionally introduced Foot and Mouth disease in Taiwan for economic and political advantage; that Al-Qaeda was seeking to purchase biological pathogens once weaponized by the Soviet Union; and that Saddam Hussein of Iraq had recruited former biowarfare specialists from the Soviet Union and was importing materials to create biological weapons. It further notes that a majority of Americans had opposed a planned deployment of U.S. soldiers to the

Middle East, which was also opposed by Iraq, China and Russia. The script also asserts that the soldiers were being deployed to counter and potentially engage the Iraqi military. Later, as the exercise unfolds, many of those Americans once skeptical about this troop deployment soon begin calling for “revenge.” Amid this backdrop, news **suddenly breaks** that smallpox, a disease long eradicated in the U.S. and globally, appears to have broken out in the state of Oklahoma. The participants in Dark Winter, representing the National Security Council, quickly deduce that smallpox has been deliberately introduced and that this is the result of a “bioterrorist attack on the United States.” The assumption is made that the attack is “related to decisions we may make to deploy troops to the Mid-East.” Not unlike what is unfolding currently with the Covid-19 crisis, in Dark Winter, there is no means of rapid diagnosis for smallpox, no treatments available and no surge capacity in the healthcare system. The outbreak quickly spreads to numerous other U.S. states and throughout the world. Hospitals in the U.S. soon face “desperate situations” as “tens of thousands of ill or anxious persons seek care.” This is compounded by “grossly inadequate supplies” and “insufficient isolation rooms,” among other complications.

Since this exercise occurred in June 2001, the heavy hinting that Saddam Hussein-led Iraq and Al Qaeda are the main suspects is notable. Indeed, at one point in one of the fictional news reports used in the exercise, **the reporter states** that “Iraq might have provided the technology behind the attacks to terrorist groups based in Afghanistan.” Such claims that Iraq’s government was linked to Al Qaeda in Afghanistan would re-emerge months later in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks, and would be heavily promoted by several Dark Winter participants such as former CIA Director James Woolsey, who would later **swear under oath** that Saddam Hussein was involved in 9/11. It would, of course, later emerge that Iraq’s connections to Al Qaeda and the 9/11 attacks were nonexistent as well as the fact that Iraq did not possess biological weapons or other “weapons of mass destruction.”

Notably, this insertion into one of the Dark Winter news clips was not the only part of the exercise that sought to link Saddam Hussein and Iraq to biological weapons. For instance, during the exercise, satellite imaging showed that a “suspected bioresearch facility” in Iraq appeared to be expanding an “exclusionary zone” in order to limit civilian activity near the facility as well as a “possible quarantine” area in the same area as this facility. Previously in the exercise, Iraq was one of three countries, along with Iran and North Korea, who were “repeatedly rumored” to have illicitly obtained Soviet smallpox cultures from defecting scientists and Iraq was alleged to have offered employment to a leading smallpox scientist who had worked on the Soviet bioweapons program.

Then, at the end of the exercise, a “prominent Iraqi defector” emerges who claims Iraq had arranged the bioweapons attack “through intermediaries,” which is deemed “highly credible” even though “there is no forensic evidence to support this claim.” Iraq officially denies the accusation, but vows to target the U.S. in “highly damaging ways” if the U.S. “takes action against Iraq.” **It is thus unsurprising that, as will be shown later in this report, key participants in Dark Winter would heavily promote the narrative that Iraq was to blame for the 2001 Anthrax attacks. Other participants, including Robert Kadlec, would then become involved in the FBI’s “sabotaged” investigation once the Bureau began to focus on a domestic, as opposed to an international source.**

In addition, as part of Dark Winter, mainstream media outlets, including the *New York Times* and others, were sent anonymous letters that threatened renewed attacks on the U.S., including anthrax attacks, if the U.S. did not withdraw its troops from the Middle East. In this simulation, those letters contained “a genetic fingerprint of the smallpox strain matching the fingerprint of the strain causing the current epidemic.” **During the Anthrax attacks that would occur just a few months after Dark Winter, Judith Miller – who participated in Dark Winter – and other U.S. reporters would receive threatening letters with a white powder presumed to be Anthrax. In Miller’s case, the powder turned out to be harmless. Other aspects of Dark Winter appear more notable now than ever, particularly in light of recent pandemic simulations that were conducted by the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security (Event 201) and the Trump administration (Crimson Contagion) in 2019, as well as the federal government’s current options for responding to Covid-19.**

For instance, Dark Winter warns of “dangerous misinformation” spreading online selling “unverified” cures and making similarly “unverified” claims, all of which are deemed as posing a threat to public



safety. Such concerns over online misinformation/disinformation and narrative control have recently surfaced in connection with the current Covid-19 crisis. Notable, however, is the fact that the “Event 201” simulation held last October, which simulated a global pandemic caused by a novel coronavirus, also **greatly emphasized** concerns about such misinformation/disinformation and suggested increased social media censorship and “limited internet shutdowns” to combat the issue. That simulation was co-hosted by the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security, which is **currently led** by Dark Winter co-author Thomas Inglesby.

**In short, the training which is supposed to be realistic shares traits with reality, misinformation like this article were predicted**

Dark Winter further discusses the suppression and removal of civil liberties, such as the possibility of the President to invoke “The Insurrection Act”, which would allow the military to act as law enforcement upon request by a State governor, as well as the possibility of “martial rule.” The Dark Winter script also discusses how options for martial rule “include, but are not limited to, prohibition of free assembly, national travel ban, quarantine of certain areas, suspension of the writ of habeas corpus [i.e. arrest without due process], and/or military trials in the event that the court system becomes dysfunctional.” The exercise later includes “credible allegations” that those deemed “suspicious for smallpox” by authorities were illegally arrested or detained and that these arrests largely targeted low income individuals or ethnic minorities. In terms of current events, it is worth pointing out that U.S. Attorney General William Barr and the Department of Justice he leads have **recently requested** new “emergency powers” that are allegedly related to the current Covid-19 outbreak. That request specifically references the ability to indefinitely detain Americans without right to a free trial.

**I am not defending the government when I point out that this is all standard**

## Weaving a narrative



After examining Dark Winter, it then becomes important to examine the events the exercise seemingly predicted, namely the 2001 anthrax attacks. This is particularly crucial for two reasons: first, that the source of the Anthrax was later traced to a domestic source, allegedly the USAMRIID lab in Fort Detrick; and second, the mode of attack and the initial narrative of those attacks were straight out of the Dark Winter playbook. Furthermore, key players in the government response to the anthrax attacks, including those with apparent foreknowledge of the attacks, as well as those who sought (falsely) to link those attacks to Saddam Hussein and Al Qaeda were also participants in Dark Winter.

They allege conspiracy, do yourself a quick research of conspiracy math. The more people involved or aware the sooner it unravels with evidence. This conspiracy scale would last five years, 19 years later, we don't have proof, and folks are still "weaving a narrative." It's not a surprise the people trained to assume Saddam assumed Saddam.

Weeks before the first Anthrax case would be discovered, on the evening of September 11, 2001, then-Vice President Dick Cheney's staff was told to start taking injections of the antibiotic Cipro in order to prevent Anthrax infection. In addition, at least one member of the press, journalist Richard Cohen – then at the *Washington Post* – had also been told to take Cipro soon after September 11 after receiving a tip "in a roundabout way from a high government official." Who exactly in the Bush administration and in the Beltway began taking Cipro weeks prior to the anthrax attacks and for how long? Unfortunately, the answer to that question remains unanswered. Yet, it has since been revealed that the person who had told these officials to take Cipro was none other than Dark Winter participant Jerome Hauer, who had previously served for nearly 8 years at the U.S. Army Medical Research and Development Command (USAMRDC), which oversees the USAMRIID lab at Fort Detrick.

Military total inoculation of service members began in 1998 because the threat was recognized, hence Dark Winter.

Hauer, on September 11, 2001, was the managing director of Kroll Inc., a private intelligence and security company informally known as the "CIA of Wall Street," a company that French intelligence had accused of acting as a front for the actual CIA. Kroll Inc., at the time of the attacks was responsible for security at the World Trade Center complex, yet Hauer was conveniently not present at his World Trade Center office on the day of the attacks, instead appearing on cable news. More on the series of "conveniences" that have followed Hauer throughout his career, especially over the course of 2001, and the massive amounts of money he stands to make off of the current Covid-19 epidemic will be discussed in detail in [Part II of this series](#).

Then, on September 12, Donald Kagan of the neoconservative think tank the Project for a New American Century (PNAC), whose members populated key posts in the Bush administration, made an odd comment (for the time, anyway) about the September 11 attacks and Anthrax. Speaking on Washington DC radio, Kagan – after suggesting that the U.S. should invade Afghanistan, Iraq and Palestine in retaliation for September 11 – asks "What would have happened if they had anthrax on that plane?" That same day, James Woolsey, himself a PNAC member and also a Dark Winter participant, claimed that Iraq was to blame for September 11 during a cable news interview.

In a world afraid of Anthrax, someone was worried about Anthrax, surprise.

A week later, another PNAC member and advisor to the Bush White House– Richard Perle – told *CNN* that the next terror attack is likely to involve "chemical or biological weapons." Soon after, Jerome Hauer re-emerges, claiming that the government now has a "new sense of urgency" regarding bioterrorist threats and asserts that "Osama Bin Laden wants to acquire these [biological] agents and we know he has links to Saddam and Saddam Hussein has them." Of course, Saddam Hussein did not actually possess these biological weapons, although he did during the *fictional* Dark Winter exercise in which Hauer had actively participated. Just days after Hauer made these bold claims, *ABC News* reported that the alleged 9/11 hijackers may have intended to modify crop dusters to disperse Anthrax.

All of this took place several days before the first anthrax victim, photojournalist Bob Stevens, would even begin to show symptoms and over a week before doctors would even begin to suspect that his condition had been caused by Anthrax poisoning.

Now would not a rational person see all the talk about how dangerous Anthrax could be then thinking, "hmm, anthrax would be great for an attack." Last American Vagabond began with a conclusion and found a justification that doesn't work when approached from other angles.

On October 2, as Stevens' health began to rapidly deteriorate, a new book co-written by journalist Judith Miller of the *New York Times* was released. Entitled "*Germs: Biological Weapons and America's Secret War*," the book asserted that the U.S. faced an unprecedented bioterrorism threat from terrorist groups like Al Qaeda. It further alleged that such groups may have teamed up with countries such as Iraq and Russia. Miller, who had participated in Dark Winter months prior, had conducted numerous interviews

with senior White House officials for the book, particularly Dick Cheney's chief of staff I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby.

Libby, although he had not personally attended Dark Winter, was greatly impacted by the exercise when he learned of it, so much so that he had **personally arranged** for Cheney to watch the video of the entire Dark Winter exercise on September 20, 2001. Cheney took the contents of Dark Winter to the National Security Council the very next day. It would **later be reported** in *New York* magazine that, "a few days after 9/11," the principal authors of Dark Winter – Randall Larsen, Tara O'Toole and Thomas Inglesby – would personally meet with Cheney and members of the administration's national security staff about the exercise.

**After a terror attack, people warning of other terror attacks were listened to, surprise.**

Larsen, who **worked closely with** Robert Kadlec throughout the 1990s, allegedly smuggled a test tube of weaponized *Bacillus globigii*, "almost genetically identical to anthrax," into the meeting, according to that report. It is unclear when this meeting took place in relation to when Cheney had watched the video of the Dark Winter exercise.

The same day that Miller's "Germs" was released, October 2, another odd occurrence took place. A former scientist at the USAMRIID lab at Fort Detrick, Dr. Ayaad Assaad, received a call from the FBI after someone who intimately knew Assaad's work history and career in great detail (and who also claimed to have previously worked with Assaad) had anonymously accused him of being a "potential biological terrorist" with a deep-seated hatred of the U.S. government. At the time the letter was received by the FBI, neither the public nor the FBI were aware of any anthrax cases. Assaad, who was then working for the Environmental Protection Agency, told the FBI that he believed he was being framed by former co-workers. The FBI deemed this to be credible and never contacted Assaad in connection with the case again.

It later emerged in **the Hartford Courant** that Assaad had been the target of extensive harassment by a clique of co-workers at the USAMRIID lab in the early 1990s. One of those co-workers who had harassed Assaad would leave the lab disgruntled as a result of the controversy over Assaad's harassment allegations. He would later return to the lab to conduct unauthorized, late night research on Anthrax and be tied to several missing specimens of Anthrax and other pathogens – Lt. Col. Philip Zack.

Zack, in 2001, was working for the U.S. biotechnology company Gilead Sciences. Though he first began working for Gilead in 1999, he was **"handpicked"** in 2001 to lead the establishment of "a new Project Management Department in conjunction with a complete restructure of R&D [Research and Development]." Donald Rumsfeld, another member of PNAC, became the chairman of Gilead Sciences **in 1997** and he served as chairman of that company up until he became George W. Bush's Secretary of Defense in early 2001.

Rumsfeld would later announce on September 10, 2001 that \$2.3 trillion had gone "missing" from the Pentagon's budget. The Pentagon's accounting office, whose staff was attempting to locate these missing trillions, would be destroyed on September 11, 2001. Though planes being flown into the Pentagon would later be described by government officials as "unimaginable" and "unthinkable" after the attacks, **a simulation** of planes being flown into the Pentagon had been conducted less than a year prior to September 11.

**Bring in the 9/11 truthers.**

## Terror Redux

On October 4, 2001, Bob Stevens' anthrax poisoning diagnosis was made known to the FBI and CDC and the public was then informed via a press conference. The second anthrax case was declared soon after and was a co-worker of Stevens', who had worked for the Florida-based newspaper, *the Sun*.

A day later, White House officials began to immediately pressure then-FBI Director Robert Mueller to prove that the anthrax attacks were linked to Al Qaeda, despite there being no evidence to make such a link. "They really wanted to blame somebody in the Middle East," a then-senior FBI official would later tell **the New York Daily News** of the meetings.

**Over the next few weeks, suspicious letters containing fine, white powder were sent to well-known American journalists, including NBC's Tom Brokaw and The New York Times' Judith Miller, though the**

powder in the letter addressed to Miller was found to be harmless. Notably, Miller and other *New York Times* journalists wrote a total of 27 articles specifically about Anthrax and its potential use as a bioweapon between September 12, 2001 and the day before Stevens was diagnosed with anthrax poisoning.

The senators and the hoaxes were fine white powder, and the reporters received Anthrax in a lumpy brown form “like Purina Dog Chow.” The cumulative basic errors in Vagabond’s reporting are concerning.

Letters containing Anthrax were also received by Senators Tom Daschle, Russ Feingold and Patrick Leahy, all of whom were – at the time – preventing the US Patriot Act from quickly passing through the Senate and who were resisting administration attempts to ram the legislation through with little to no debate. Several of the letters included the date “9-11-01” and the phrases “Death to America, Death to Israel, Allah is great” in neatly-printed block letters.

Soon after, a suspicious letter was found in the office of then-Congressman and current Vice President Mike Pence. *Media Roots* noted the following about Pence’s subsequent press conference in a 2018 podcast that examined the timeline of the 2001 anthrax attacks:

The following source makes no mention of a letter. I did not find anything Pence receiving a suspicious letter. If there is information on this, I’ll issue an update.

***“...Mike Pence, who once hosted an AM talk show describing himself as ‘Rush Limbaugh on decaf,’ conducts a press conference outside the Capitol proclaiming revenge and biblical style justice to whoever conducted the anthrax attacks. His family—with news cameras in tow—gets tested for Anthrax at the hospital after it is allegedly found in his office.***

***No news outlets questioned his grandstanding or odd performance of going to the hospital with his family, and unlike Senators Daschle and Leahy in their press appearances, Mike Pence alluded to the anthrax letters being connected to the larger ‘war on terror.’”***

As public panic swelled, more letters continued to be found, not just in the United States but around the world, with Anthrax and/or hoax letters being found in Japan, Kenya, Israel, China and Australia, among others. Simultaneously, efforts to link the anthrax attacks to Saddam Hussein and Iraq began to emerge and quickly grew in intensity and number.

The same can be said of any other attack: scams, injurious, terror, and homicidal acts are followed by copycats and replicators across ideological lines and language barriers. The first attack is like a ‘proof of concept’ emboldening plots in the works and inspiring others.

The media push to link the attacks to Iraq began first with *The Guardian* and then was followed by U.S. media outlets like *The Wall Street Journal*. Those early reports cited unnamed “American investigators” and defense officials and largely centered on the false claim that alleged 9/11 mastermind Mohammad Atta had met with an Iraqi diplomat in Prague in late 2000 as well as similarly false allegations that members of Al Qaeda had recently obtained vials of Anthrax in the Czech Republic.

A key person in disseminating that false Prague story was Dark Winter participant and PNAC member James Woolsey. It was also revealed in late October 2001 that Woolsey was serving as the personal emissary of Paul Wolfowitz, Iraq War “architect” and then-Deputy Secretary of Defense, in “investigating Iraqi involvement in the September 11 attacks and anthrax outbreaks.”

Beyond the Pentagon, foreign “experts” soon began to assert that there was a link between the anthrax attacks and Iraq, including former Israeli military intelligence officer Dany Shoham. Shoham recently resurfaced this past January after claiming that Covid-19 was developed by the Chinese government as a bioweapon.



The wingnut struck twice, surprise.

These assertions were soon followed by a report from ABC News' Brian Ross, who (again falsely) claimed that some of the Anthrax used in the attacks had contained bentonite. Ross claimed that bentonite "is a trademark of Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein's biological weapons program" and that "only one country, Iraq, has used bentonite to produce biological weapons." Ross asserted this information had come from three "well-placed but separate sources," which later grew to four. Yet, no tests conducted during the Anthrax investigation ever found any bentonite at all, meaning the story was an invention from the very start. ABC and Brian Ross never retracted the story.

Sloppy reporting and a misreading of rapid onsite tests. This is lousy reporting on Ross's part that the Vagabond misconstrued.

Glenn Greenwald, then writing at Salon, would state the following about Ross' sources in 2008:

***"Ross' allegedly four separate sources had to have some specific knowledge of the tests conducted and, if they were really 'well-placed,' one would presume that meant they had some connection to the laboratory where the tests were conducted — Ft. Detrick. That means that the same Government lab where the anthrax attacks themselves came from was the same place where the false reports originated that blamed those attacks on Iraq.***

***It's extremely possible — one could say highly likely — that the same people responsible for perpetrating the attacks were the ones who fed the false reports to the public, through ABC News, that Saddam was behind them. What we know for certain — as a result of the letters accompanying the Anthrax — is that whoever perpetrated the attacks wanted the public to believe they were sent by foreign Muslims. Feeding claims to ABC News designed to link Saddam to those attacks would, for obvious reasons, promote the goal of the anthrax attacker(s)."***

Soon, media reports began noting the contradictory messaging of the U.S. government with regards to the anthrax attacks, messaging which has striking parallels to the Trump administration's messaging on Covid-19. In one such report, written by Matthew Engel for The Guardian, states:

***"Those in charge have compounded the problems by sending out confused messages. Was the anthrax weapons-grade or not? Should Americans be alarmed or relaxed? Has President Bush himself been tested? The signals keep changing. Mr. Thompson suggested early on that Bob Stevens, the first anthrax victim, might have drunk from an infected stream."***

During the 2001 anthrax attacks, there was no shortage of contradictory actions either, such as the government's failure to mandate that postal workers take Cipro or even take the simplest precautions even though members of the Bush administration had been taking Cipro weeks before the anthrax attacks were known to the FBI and the public. Even worse, the Bush administration waited an extremely long time to close post offices for anthrax testing, waiting until numerous postal workers had already become infected and some had already died. In addition, Ernesto Blanco – a Florida mail room worker who later recovered from Anthrax poisoning – and his family were left confused about the refusal of the

Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to diagnose him with anthrax poisoning while he was in dire condition. Blanco's family **later claimed** that his diagnosis had been kept a secret for political reasons.

**This is all standard.**

## BASIS for surveillance and control

The contradictory response of the Bush administration to the anthrax attacks and the panic that ensued was also paralleled by an equally contradictory **sensor system, one which had been installed just a few months before the anthrax attacks in thirty cities throughout the U.S. despite a dubious record of accuracy.**

Just as the fictional scenarios proposed in Dark Winter were being written, American scientists were developing a sensor system for the detection of anthrax and botulinum toxin called BASIS (Biological Aerosol Sentry and Information Systems). Months before Anthrax would cause extreme panic and target American Senators, scientists from Los Alamos and the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory were testing the biological sensing device at the Dugway Proving Ground in Utah, inside the Special Programs Division of what was once the site of the **U.S. biological weapons program and where anthrax samples used at Fort Detrick are often produced.**

It is worth noting that Dugway, not unlike Fort Detrick, has a longstanding issues with **biosafety lapses** that have resulted in numerous mishaps, such as their accidental shipment of live Anthrax **over 70 times** to 86 different labs throughout the world from 2005-2015. Independent analyses conducted after the FBI closed its investigation into the attacks have suggested that Dugway may have been the source of the Anthrax used in the attacks, as opposed to Fort Detrick.

Returning to BASIS, the results of the tests conducted on this new sensor system in 2001 showed that it was highly prone to generating false positives and was, therefore, worthless beyond the ability to **"induce the very panic and social disruption it is intended to thwart"**, according to the Livermore Laboratory, which nevertheless marketed BASIS as a tool to "guard the air we breathe." Vice President Cheney, following his September 2001 briefing on Dark Winter, decided to install the system in the White House.

Days after Senator Tom Daschle's press conference that revealed he had been targeted by the anthrax attacker, President Bush was in Shanghai attending the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit when he received a call from Dick Cheney on Airforce Two. Cheney delivered a chilling message — the President and Secretaries Condoleezza Rice and Colin Powell, who were with Bush in China, might have been exposed to the ultra-lethal botulinum toxin at the White House.

BASIS had returned two positive results for the deadly neurotoxin and – if the tests held true – three of the U.S.' highest ranking officials were "toast." Yet, once again, BASIS had lived up to its reputation as a great panic-inducing mechanism when the supposed botulinum toxin hits were determined to have been false positives. Apparently, this "unintended" feature was a real selling point, as proven by George W. Bush's subsequent **deployment of the system in thirty cities** throughout the country under the auspices of the newly-minted Department of Homeland Security as part of a program called **Bio-Watch.**

Given the events described, it is noteworthy that BASIS relies on the CDC's Laboratory Response Network (LRN) to identify the biological agents trapped by its sensors. The 150 state and local laboratories that make up the LRN use a polymerase chain reaction (PCR-based) analysis, which is **ill-equipped to detect the aforementioned botulinum toxin.** In addition, the Bio-Watch program is plagued by bureaucratic and logistical problems, which further undermine any potential public health benefits. DHS was fully aware of the program's limitations from the start and issued requests for proposals (RFPs) for the development of autonomous sensor technology that would eliminate the need for manual sample collection. The Bioagent Autonomous Networked Detector (BAND) program was then initiated by HSARPA (Homeland Security Advanced Research Projects Agency) in September of 2003 and, in 2008, awarded a multi-year contract for its development to **MicroFluidic Systems, Inc.,** a company founded by Allen Northrup. Northrup is also co-founder of Cepheid, a diagnostic testing company that **received FDA approval** for a 45-minute Covid-19 test less than two weeks ago.

In tandem with the development of BASIS shortly before 9/11 and the 2001 anthrax attacks, DARPA was sponsoring a surveillance program to collect data on U.S. citizens without their knowledge or consent by using their medical records. The ostensible purpose of that program was to develop algorithms that could detect a bioweapons attack based on real-time data input. The Bio-Event Advanced Leading Indicator Recognition Technology, or Bio-ALIRT, is at the heart of what Dark Winter co-author, Dr. Tara O'Toole, calls the "information supply chain."

"We need to have a disciplined flow of information during epidemics that goes to the people who need to know what they need to know," O'Toole recently told [Ira Pastor](#) in an interview. "That's different from this cosmic surveillance system, that captures all the possible information all the time and tells us, in advance when an epidemic is coming. We need a supply chain of information to manage the epidemic." O'Toole, who now works for the CIA's venture capital arm [In-Q-Tel](#), and her longstanding promotion of mass surveillance in the name of "public health" will be discussed in a subsequent installment of this series.

DARPA's partners in this Orwellian endeavor were, perhaps unsurprisingly, recurring actors in the arena of biological attack simulations, from Johns Hopkins to the University of Pittsburgh – the Biosecurity centers of which were [both previously run by O'Toole](#) – and defense industry giants, General Dynamics and IBM.

Hovering over these draconian innovations floats the overarching narrative, which the 2001 anthrax attacks were supposed to activate in popular consciousness. Though the attacks would be pinned on USAMRIID scientist Bruce Ivins, the highly questionable investigative and prosecutorial methods employed in Ivins' case, not to mention his timely pre-trial suicide, may instead offer clues regarding a botched false flag operation that had originally been designed to bolster the creation of a new geopolitical chessboard pitting the U.S. against its same perpetual enemies.

Ever enjoy how the evidence for conspiracies is simultaneously in government documents but also not in them?

## Covering up the real conspiracy



From its earliest moments, the FBI's "Amerithrax" investigation into the 2001 anthrax attacks was clearly botched, sabotaged and even farcical. For instance, the letter sent to Dr. Ayaad Assaad would obviously have been a clear starting point for any honest investigation, as whoever wrote it had obvious foreknowledge of the attacks, connections to USAMRIID and was attempting to frame someone else for a crime that – at the time it was sent – had yet to be committed. Yet, [The Hartford Courant noted](#) in late

2001 that “the FBI is not tracking the source of the anonymous letter, despite its curious timing, coming a matter of days before the existence of anthrax-laced mail became known.” Why would the FBI not be interested in who wrote that letter, when it presents a clear lead on someone who, at the very least, knew a bioterrorism attack would soon take place and that the attacker’s profile would fit that of Assaad (i.e. Muslim and a former USAMRIID scientist).

It’s also a fun paradox that the all-powerful evils are also leaving cookie crumbs and bunglings and name dropping their secret agendas. Almost seems like this was conceived backward in retrospect, like historical fiction.

In addition, in the early days of the investigation on October 12, 2001 – just one week after the attacks had claimed their first victim, the FBI called the University of Iowa and demanded that they destroy their entire database on the Ames strain of Anthrax, the strain that would later be revealed to have been the very strain used in the attacks.

Both the FBI and the university officially claimed that the database’s destruction was ordered in order to prevent its potential use by terrorists in the future and was thus a “precaution,” despite greatly hampering the capacity of the investigation to determine the origins of the Anthrax used in the attacks. Dr. Francis Boyle, an American law professor who drafted the Biological Weapons Anti-Terrorism Act of 1989, later asserted that the FBI’s decision to order the destruction of the Ames strain database was an “obstruction of justice, a federal crime,” adding that “...That collection should have been preserved and protected as evidence. That’s the DNA, the fingerprints right there.”

Threat mitigation over evidence preservation is the American norm. A university lab would assumably be less secure than others. The university is so laid back even I have published there.

Can the destruction of the Ames strain database and the decision to not pursue any leads related to the anonymous letter framing Dr. Assaad be written off as merely “missteps” made in the earliest and arguably most crucial days of the investigation? The fact that the Bush administration, as previously mentioned, was strongly pressuring then-FBI Director Robert Mueller to find a connection to “someone in the Middle East” at the same time these decision were made instead suggests that the investigation was highly politicized and manipulated by top government officials from the very beginning.

The FBI investigation continued to be marred by similarly obstructive actions. For instance, the anthrax sample that was in the envelope addressed to Senator Patrick Leahy had been found to contain traces of human DNA, a crucial finding that the FBI laboratory deliberately concealed from the agency’s own investigators. The FBI lab then declined to search for a match to this human DNA sample, despite the fact that doing so would – in all probability – lead to the actual attacker.

<https://www.justice.gov/archive/amerithrax/docs/amx-investigative-summary2.pdf> Deliberate misreporting. The DNA was that of the lab technician handling the Leahy envelope and has been tested. Due to all the obstruction and deliberate sabotage that took place, the investigation progressed slowly as crucial clues were ignored or outright discarded, apparently in order to keep FBI investigators off of the real trail. After coming under political and media pressure at least name a suspect, the FBI began to focus on former USAMRIID researcher Stephen Hatfill.

Despite lacking any good reason to pursue Hatfill, the FBI – accompanied by TV crews – raided Hatfill’s apartment in biohazard suits and then-Attorney General John Ashcroft later publicly named him a “person of interest” in the case. The FBI pressured Hatfill’s then-employer to fire him and refused to clear his name years after the Bureau knew full well that he had no connection to the crime. Hatfill first sued the government in 2003 and the Department of Justice settled with Hatfill five years later, paying him \$4.6 million in damages.

Though it was eventually settled, Hatfill’s lawsuit initially resulted in some odd claims from FBI investigators, with Richard Lambert – the FBI official in charge of the Amerithrax investigation, claiming that the lawsuit “could jeopardize the probe and expose national secrets related to U.S. bioweapons defense measures.” He also claimed it would “make public the vulnerabilities and capabilities of U.S. government installations to bioweapons attacks and expose sensitive intelligence collection sources and methods.” Lambert would later file a federal whistleblower lawsuit where he accused the Bureau’s Washington field office and FBI headquarters of having “greatly obstructed and impeded the investigation.”



You forget the government freaking out about the Call of Duty games. They over-classify and panic all the time. I.e, American military satellite resolution is classified. The official figures are thirty years old despite the knowledge that they are higher resolution than commercial satellites and that commercial satellites far exceed the official figures of military satellites.

The Department of Justice, which oversees the FBI, would make a similar argument when Maureen Stevens, the wife of the first anthrax victim Bob Stevens, sued the federal government over the lax security measures in place at the USAMRIID lab where the Anthrax used in the attacks was alleged to have originated. Stevens' lawyer said the lawsuit was **also filed** due to "the government's stonewalling tactics," which included "taking months to turn over an autopsy report, denying them access to DNA tests and even denying them money from the Sept. 11 Victims Compensation Fund." Citing "national security concerns," federal attorneys sought to delay Stevens' lawsuit, **arguing that** the litigation "would pose a significant risk of disclosing classified or sensitive information relating to the acquisition, development and use of weapons of mass destruction such as anthrax."

In 2008, soon after Hatfill was cleared and the lawsuit with him settled, the FBI began to focus on another USAMRIID researcher, Dr. Bruce E. Ivins. Ivins, who had previously helped the FBI analyze the Anthrax used in the letters sent to politicians, journalists and others, was aggressively targeted by the FBI through aggressive surveillance and what can only be described as extreme harassment.

As Glenn Greenwald **noted in Salon** in 2008, "the FBI investigation was so heavy-handed that it actually entailed showing gruesome photographs of the anthrax victims to Ivins' adult children, telling them that their father is the one who did that, while trying to entice them to turn on him with promises of a reward." It was also revealed that addiction counselor Jean Duley, whose restraining order against Ivins was used by the media as "proof" that he was deranged and a likely "lone wolf" terrorist, had **actually been egged on** by none other than the FBI to seek that very restraining order.

**We're pretending to be surprised b character assassinations now.**

The FBI, as it ramped up its targeting of Ivins, leaked much of its evidence to media outlets, which – for the most part – uncritically reported it. However, it eventually became clear that the case was shoddy and would never hold up in court as it was built **on circumstantial evidence** and questionable scientific analyses.

It was then announced on July 29, 2008 that Ivins, whose life and career had been left in ruins by the FBI's aggressive tactics, had committed suicide just as the federal government was set to charge him as the sole culprit behind the Anthrax attacks. Few chose to question the suicide narrative despite there being legitimate reasons to do so, such as the lack of a suicide note at the scene and the fact that **no autopsy was ever performed** on Ivins' corpse.

**But sufficient evidence to rule it suicide existed from the blood work and physical evidence of the body and surroundings. I'd have appreciated an autopsy, but this is a mountain out of a molehill.**

Former FBI agent Richard Lambert's whistleblower lawsuit **would later reveal** that the FBI had intentionally withheld a "wealth" of evidence that proved Ivins' innocence and further charged that the DOJ and FBI had "crafted an elaborate perception management campaign to bolster their assertion of Ivins' guilt" that included "press conferences and highly selective evidentiary presentations which were replete with material omissions."

**The "wealth" of evidence that proved Ivins' innocence is not present in this document, just two references to exculpatory evidence and other typical finaglings by the FBI.**

After Ivins' suicide, questions continued to arise regarding the FBI's case against the deceased scientist, with several journalists and **even Senator Patrick Leahy** – who had been sent an Anthrax letter – insisting that the FBI's case against Ivins, particularly the charge that he had acted alone, was implausible. A former co-worker of Ivins and one of the country's top biowarfare experts, Richard Spertzel, **asserted in The Wall Street Journal** that Ivins couldn't have been the culprit because Ivins did not know how to make Anthrax of the quality used in the attacks as only 4-5 people in the entire country, Spertzel being one of them, knew how to do so. Spertzel asserted that one of those 4-5 people would have needed at least a year as well as a full lab and a staff dedicate to the task in order to produce the Anthrax used.

In an attempt to mollify mounting criticism, Mueller **announced in September 2008** that a panel from the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) would independently review the FBI's "smoking gun" scientific analyses that had led them to accuse Ivins. However, the FBI abruptly closed the case in 2010, well before the panel could conclude its review, and stood by its controversial assertion that Ivins had acted as a "lone wolf" and that Anthrax from a flask in Ivins' lab was "conclusively identified as the parent material to the anthrax powder used in the mailings."

When the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) did **release its review** of the FBI's scientific findings a year later in 2011, it found that the Bureau's "smoking gun" scientific evidence against Ivins was actually very inconclusive and they also identified several still, unresolved issues with the FBI's analyses for which the Bureau could not provide an explanation.

However, because Ivins had died before the FBI's scientific case could go to trial, the FBI's claims would never be challenged in court. David Relman, vice chairman of the National Academy study committee, **later told ProPublica** that Ivins' trial would have been the only way the FBI's claims "could have been weighed and challenged by experts."

The NAS study was not the only independent report that challenged the FBI's case against Ivins after his apparent suicide. In 2014, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) released its **own analysis** of the FBI investigation and concluded that the FBI's approach lacked consistency, adequate standards and precision. The GAO report ultimately supported the NAS' conclusion that the scientific evidence did not definitely prove Ivins to be the culprit.

The conclusions of both the NAS and GAO reports show that the FBI's "smoking gun" against Ivins – its scientific analyses – were hardly a smoking gun as they were just as circumstantial as the rest of the Bureau's evidence against the scientist. This, of course, makes the timing of the FBI's decision to close the case, a year before any independent analysis of its evidence against Ivins could be completed, significant.

## A familiar cast of characters

Key players in Dark Winter would also end up playing a role in the FBI Amerithrax investigation and Bush administration efforts to link them to a foreign, rather than a domestic, source. For instance, as increasingly desperate efforts were made to link the anthrax attacks to Al Qaeda in early 2002, an "independent" team from the Johns Hopkins Center for Civilian Biodefense Strategies argued that the anthrax attackers were linked to Al Qaeda, citing a diagnosis made by a Florida doctor in June 2001 that alleged 9/11 hijacker Ahmed al-Haznawi had a skin lesion that was "consistent with cutaneous anthrax." Yet, this team from Johns Hopkins was – in reality — far from independent, as **it was led by** Dark Winter co-authors Tara O'Toole and Thomas Inglesby. However, their association with Dark Winter and their September 2001 meeting with Dick Cheney went unmentioned as media outlets ran with **O'Toole and Inglesby's assertion** that al-Haznawi's allegedly anthrax-related lesion "raises the possibility that the hijackers were handling anthrax and were the perpetrators of the anthrax letter attacks." Other scientists and analysts as well as the FBI **challenged and rejected their claims**.

Another Dark Winter figure involved in the Amerithrax case was current Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Robert Kadlec, who became an adviser on biological warfare to the Rumsfeld-led Pentagon in the days after 9/11. Kadlec's **official biography** states that he "contributed to the FBI investigation of the anthrax letter attacks," though it's unclear exactly what those contributions were, beyond having **met at least once with** scientists at Fort Detrick in November 2001. Whatever his contributions were, Kadlec has long been **an emphatic supporter** of the official narrative regarding Bruce Ivins, who he has referred to as a "deranged scientist" and the sole culprit behind the attacks. Kadlec **has also used** the official narrative about Ivins to assert that bioweapons have been "democratized," which he argues means that weaponized pathogens can be wielded by essentially anyone with "a few thousand dollars" and enough time on their hands.

**Side comment, most weapons, including WMDs, have been "democratized." The loss of drug stores, Radio Shacks, and chemistry sets aren't coincidental; this democratization of science can quickly produce weapons and drugs affordably.**

Notably, Kadlec isn't the only key figure in the current U.S. government response to Covid-19 to have ties to the botched FBI investigation as current HHS Secretary Alex Azar **was also involved** in the FBI investigation. In addition, Azar stated at a White House press briefing in 2018 that he had been "personally involved in much of managing the response [to the anthrax attacks]" as then-General counsel to HHS.

Yet, given that the FBI investigation into the anthrax attacks and the government response to them were so disastrous and heavily criticized by independent and mainstream media alike, it is surprising that Azar and Kadlec would so proudly tout their involvement in that fiasco, especially considering that the scientific analyses used in that investigation were fatally flawed and, by all indications, led to the death of an innocent man.

While such credentials in a "normal" world would be grounds for exclusion from public service, they apparently have the opposite effect when it comes to post-2001 HHS policy and U.S. biodefense policy, which – especially following 2001 – has championed the interests and profits of corporate pharmaceutical companies and the apocalyptic vision of bioweapons held by war hawks and perpetual Cold Warriors. This latter category, of course, includes members of the now-defunct PNAC, who infamously referred to racially-targeted bioweapons as a "politically useful tool" in a **now infamous 2000 document**, and their ideological descendants.

As the next installment of this series will show, Dark Winter participant and 2001 anthrax attack insider Jerome Hauer epitomizes this merging of perpetual hawkishness and corporate pharmaceutical interests, as he has long held (and continues to occupy) key board positions of the very pharmaceutical company that not only sold tens of millions of anthrax vaccine doses to HHS following the 2001 anthrax attacks, but is now a partner in the development of the majority of vaccines, drugs and experimental treatments currently under development in the United States for the treatment of Covid-19.

Read Part II [Here](#)

## Question Everything, Come To Your Own Conclusions.

I did, and I corrected previous assumptions about your article after seeing pro-Trumpers spreading your story like proof that Biden was up to something with the deep state. And while I love a good bashing of Republicans, your reporting errors, inaccuracies, and attempting to build a definitive conclusion rather than rousing it as questions and suspicions to contemplate is conspiratorial. I'll presume innocence and that you dropped in on the hashtag for convenience with some unintended consequences. While I'd prefer to debunk deep state myths that are causing more harm, this came across my desk first. In conclusion, conspiratorialism is bad, the enemy of my enemy is not my friend, and I recommend you work on a few "little known fact but..." stories before you make more attempts at drawing imaginary lines through time and space. You have managed to instill as much doubt in the validity of the 2001 anthrax attacks as doubt in the quality of your publication. Your coronavirus implications are moot.